

MONTANA WOLF PROGRAM WEEKLY REPORT

To: Interested Parties

From: FWP Wolf Program Coordinator, Carolyn Sime (406-461-0587)

Subject: Wolf Program Activities and Related Information, June 26 – July 2, 2010

Contributors to the Montana Wolf Weekly are Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), Universities, USDA Wildlife Services (WS), the National Park Service (NPS; Glacier NP; Yellowstone National Park will be reported in the Wyoming Wolf Weekly), US Forest Service, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the Blackfeet Nation.

Highlighted activities relate to: monitoring, wolf – livestock interactions, outreach and education, research, law enforcement, and other miscellaneous topics of public interest. The Weekly Report will be available on each Monday, covering the previous week. It and other wolf program information (including the 2009 annual report) can be found on the FWP website.

Wolf Monitoring Activities

On 7/1, Smucker, Whitehead, and Snyder trapped and collared a black yearling female in the Sula pack (south end of the Bitterroot). Traps were pulled and efforts will begin again next week further up the West Fork to try to collar the Painted Rocks and Watchtower packs.

FWP welcomes volunteer Maria Cavedon to the field crew. She is from Italy, where she recently finished an advanced degree in wildlife / habitat studies.

Flights: Asher flew the Paradise Valley south of Livingston and Big Timber area on 6/28. Ross flew in the Madison, Gravelly, and Gallatin Mtn areas on 6/29. Lance flew north and south of Butte on 6/30.

Wolf - Livestock Activities

The Madison Valley Ranchlands Group continues with its Range Rider program for the seventh year in a row. The riders (Jim and Marilyn Powers) return again this year to cover public and private land in the Antelope Basin and Elk Lake allotments (USFS), the West Fork of the Madison, Wall Greek Grazing Association, and Papoose Creek. They are available when needed in Alaska Basin and the Centennial Valley. Funding has been provided by private organizations, and the Conservation District.

On 6/25, WS investigated a report of a dead calf on private land near Geraldine. It was determined that the calf was killed by lightning.

On 6/25, efforts to remove 2 wolves from the Mill Creek pack (Paradise Valley) concluded at the end of 45 days and no wolves were killed. WS had confirmed a calf as being killed by wolves on 5/11. No further losses have been reported or confirmed since then.

On 6/28 and 6/29, WS removed a total of three wolves from the Table Mountain pack south of Butte as previously requested by FWP. Control efforts are completed.

On 6/29, WS confirmed a calf as being killed by wolves in the West Fork of the Madison. This is in the Horn Mountain pack territory. A second calf was confirmed killed by wolves on 7/1 in the same area. Both calves were owned by the same producer. FWP authorized the removal of 3 wolves. None have been killed thus far.

On 6/30, WS killed a wolf south of Wisdom as part of efforts to remove the last two wolves from the Miner Lakes pack.

Outreach and Education

Nothing to report.

Research Activities

Nothing to report.

Law Enforcement and Related Activities

Nothing to report.

Other Updates

Northern Rockies Delisting Litigation in Missoula Federal Court

On 6/15, oral arguments were heard in Missoula Federal Court in the legal challenge of the USFWS decision to delist the wolf throughout the northern Rockies DPS except Wyoming. Oral arguments were presented by plaintiffs' attorneys, the Federal Department of Justice attorney representing USFWS, FWP Chief Counsel Lane, and ID Deputy Attorney General Strack. Judge Molloy said he would issue a decision as soon as possible.

Proposed 2010 Wolf Hunting Season

The FWP Commission will meet in Helena on July 7 (3pm start) for a work session to discuss the 2010 wolf hunting season proposal and some land conservation projects. No decisions will be made on July 7. The Commission reconvenes on July 8, with the Wildlife Section and the wolf season proposal scheduled to start at approximately 10:15 (times may vary as much as 1 hour earlier or later). The meeting will be at the FWP Headquarters Building on 6th Ave.

FWP received about 1500 public comments. As could be expected, comments were very diverse. FWP will propose a statewide quota of 186, spread out across 13 wolf management units. Other facets of FWP's proposal include an archery only season, a five-day waiting period for a wolf license to be valid if purchased after a wolf hunting season has opened, combining two units in western Montana (Big Hole/Tendoy and Bitterroot) into a single unit, and that any potential quota over-run in one wolf unit will be counted against the neighboring unit or towards the regional or statewide total, as appropriate.

The FWP Commission is expected to finalize parameters of a 2010 hunting season and quotas in individual wolf management units at the July 8 meeting. FWP continues to work on other implementation aspects in preparation for the season. FWP encourages the public to check the FWP website periodically for updates on the 2010 hunting season, pending a ruling from the Federal Court that could affect the 2010 season.

Montana Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board:

The Prevention Subcommittee of the Montana Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Board met on June 4 to begin crafting the Prevention side of the Board's Mission and overall program. Work is ongoing with this effort, a Funding Subcommittee, and a Rules Subcommittee.

The Board's website is www.llrmb.mt.gov. Look under Board and Meetings on the left navigation bar. Agendas and minutes from previous meetings are available at [Montana Department of Livestock](http://montana.gov/livestock). The program coordinator can be reached at 444-5609.

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To learn more about Montana's wolf population, the Montana program and to help FWP monitor wolves by reporting wolf sign, visit FWP online. Use the following shortcut link and be sure to update your bookmarks: <http://fwp.mt.gov/wolf>.

To anonymously report a dead or injured wolf or suspected illegal activity, call: 1-800-TIP-MONT.

To request an investigation of injured or dead livestock, call USDA Wildlife Services directly in western Montana / Helena area at 458-0106 or in eastern Montana at the statewide office: 657-6464. Or, call your nearest FWP representative to have your call referred to Wildlife Services.

If you have a confirmed or probable livestock death loss due to wolves, USDA Wildlife Services will supply you with a copy of the Loss Reimbursement Application form. For more information, see <http://liv.mt.gov/liv/LM/index.asp>. Or, contact the Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Program Coordinator George Edwards at the Montana Department of Livestock at 444-5609.

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